

## **RURAL EVENT VENUES IN CLARK COUNTY**

**Mitch Nickolds, Director**

### **Rural Event Venues - Report to Board of Clark County Councilors**

**January \_\_, 2020**

#### **Summary:**

Currently in the county's rural areas, event businesses are only permitted as an accessory to wineries where wineries are a permitted use. Property owners have expressed interest in a code revision that would allow rural commercial event businesses not related to wineries as a permitted property use.

On July 31 and October 9, 2019, community forums were convened to gather feedback, opinions and recommendations regarding non-winery rural event venues from residents, rural and farm enterprise operators and property owners. During forums, county staff heard from both proponents and opponents of the concept of rural event venues operated independently of wineries, and reviewed current code requirements for agricultural stands and businesses. On October 16, county council reviewed feedback from the rural event venue forums and requested a draft report with recommendations for their consideration.

The community's recommendations developed during the community forums generally supported rural business opportunities; but were conditioned with the assurance of responsive and timely county enforcement of rules; especially on weekends and evenings, and included the following conditions:

- Rural event venues and businesses without wineries should require Type II Land Use process for a Conditional Use Permit
- Rural event venues should not be permitted in private communities (HOAs)
- Traffic, signage, light, dust and noise mitigation (buffers) must be required, maintained and monitored for effectiveness by the applicant
- Venue size should be tied to the size of the lot, proximity to other residences, road size and surface
- Special events, as currently permitted by the Fire Marshal's Office, should be available for one-time non-commercial events

#### **Observations & Conclusions**

An often expressed theme in most of the forum discussions was the preservation of rural character fostering the peaceful and comfortable enjoyment of one's private property.

While there was support for allowing event venues in rural Clark County as a permitted use, without requiring operation of a winery, doing so would require substantial and costly compliance resourcing and general fund support to ensure the rural character is not further compromised and to address existing nuisance violations.

Currently, rural home occupation and agricultural district regulations do allow the permitting of a wide array of commercial services and businesses that do not require operation of a winery; including:

- Bed and breakfast establishments (three or more guest bedrooms)
- Commercial nurseries predominantly marketing locally produced plants and associated landscaping materials
- Agritourism activities promoting the sale of farm crops, provided they are supplemental to and compatible with continued use of the property for agricultural production. These activities may include, but are not limited to, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, farm animal viewing and petting, wagon rides, farm tours, harvest festivals, hayrides, educational activities and tours, and other agriculturally related similar experiences (*which could include food service and farm-to-table events*).
- Roadside farm stand and agricultural markets
- Commercial kennels on a parcel or parcels 5 acres or more, animal boarding and day use facilities
- Public interpretive/educational uses
- Private recreation facilities, including retreats, but excluding such intensive uses as country clubs and golf courses
- Event facilities less than 5,000 sq. ft. in area

The required permitting processes for property owners and occupants who may be interested in these and other rural services and businesses are readily available and established in Clark County Code.

### **Recommendations**

Given the public feedback and observations and conclusions listed above, and the potential impact on county resources the following recommendations are submitted for consideration:

- 1) No code amendments are necessary at this time. There are ample opportunities and pathways to permit commercial venues in rural Clark County that are consistent with the underlying zoning of the property.
- 2) Additional public outreach is necessary to advise rural property owners how to access the permitting process to take advantage of existing agribusiness and rural home business opportunities.
- 3) Weekend code enforcement and enhanced Sheriff patrols are necessary to ensure that only permitted activities are underway, and there is prompt abatement of unpermitted events and traffic violations.